

## GETTING THE SCHOOLS OPEN.

## A DEAL OF PRELIMINARY WORK FOR THE TEACHERS.

Figures of a Big Registration Usually Found to Be Exaggerated—Part Time Classes in Brooklyn for the Most Part—An Easy Problem in Manhattan.

The streets of New York will be quieter to-day at times than they have been for the last ten weeks, thanks for which are due to the opening of the public schools. Ball playing and other juvenile games will be suspended while the youngsters turn their faces toward the big buildings where they are to be drilled in the three R's and in C. M. S., or cooking, music and sewing.

The principals of the various schools have been preparing for the last week for the morning's work, which is to receive the children and begin arranging them into classes. Not all of the children who want to go to school show up on the week of preliminary work, and so to-day and for several days to come the teaching staff will be engaged principally in the work of registration and the formation of classes.

In a big school where there are several thousand pupils this sifting out process is quite a task, and it usually takes about a week before the children get down to the routine of study. The teachers have been enjoying a vacation as well as the scholars, and they come back from Lake George, Saginaw Park and other resorts for schoolmans with a good tan on their faces and a new stock of patience.

They will have need of much patience to-day, for multitudes of interrogation points will invade the schools and want to know. If the child is under 6 years it cannot be received, and the mother will want to know the why and wherefore. If there is doubt about the six year line, and a demerit is made for the birth certificate and it is not handy, then there is trouble between the mother and the registering teacher. The children themselves are mostly of an inquiring turn of mind and manage to keep the teachers busy in supplying information.

Because of the reports in recent years of overcrowding, many children apply for admission in the week of registration at more than one school, so that they may be sure of getting a seat in one. This duplication would account, to some extent, for the enormous figures of the school enrollment as officially announced each year. When the official announcement is made public interest is directed to the size of the school population. The figures of the enrollment create amazement, and no wonder, for the figures are misleading and give an extravagant idea of the number of children actually attending school.

As an illustration, it is a matter of record that city Superintendent Maxwell reported that for the school year of 1904 and 1905 the net enrollment was 655,503. The public was amazed at the number of children to be educated, but Dr. Maxwell says that the daily average attendance was only 47,005. What became of the 188,498 children reported to be on the books? Perhaps the error could be found in the system of department bookkeeping.

Reliable figures of the number of pupils cannot be arrived at under the present methods before the first of September, when the duplications and other errors will have been eliminated. A remarkable feature in the department's bookkeeping is shown in the difference between the average aggregation and the average attendance for 1904-1905; the latter was 64,101 less than the former. Does this mean that more than 64,000 children were truant? Or that the registration no more accurate than the enrollment?

A great deal has been said in recent years about the great increase in the number of pupils at each annual opening of the elementary schools. The increment was said to be steadily rising; the large figures were generally accepted without too close scrutiny. The financial authorities were seriously handicapped about \$2,000,000 a year and the public took it for granted that there was just cause for pride in the vast number of school children and the heavy amount of money spent on their education.

Years ago it was given out at the Board of Education that the annual increase was about 100,000 each year. How were the expectations realized? The most authentic figures are those from the records in the City Superintendent's office, and here they are: In September 30, 1906, the increase in registration was 100,000 less than that of the previous year and just 6,800. On the same day and month last year the annual increase was 14,901. Going back to 1905, it is found that the annual increase was 36,522, something unusual in school history in this city. The unusual increase was explained by the new rule to admit every child over 6 years that applied.

The main part of the trouble to-day over the lack of seats will be in Brooklyn. Any shifting of the population from one part of the city to another catches the school authorities unprepared to supply school accommodation and Brooklyn has been growing some within the past few years. The Board of Education anticipates expansion of the city in any particular direction. It waits until a certain section has acquired its population and then it starts to build schools. It takes from two to four years to put up a school after the subject is first brought up. There will be a shortage of seating capacity in the borough across the river for some time to come.

The number of part time classes is likely to be increased in that borough at the opening of this year. There are 27,711 such pupils there last May. The part time pupils in Manhattan is getting easy, because the number of school children is decreasing. The falling off was first observed last October.

## THE VULTURES' BREAKFAST.

Cat and Rat Share a Common Fate in Central Park Zoo.

A big rat that was in search of food at the back of the restaurant in the Arsenal in Central Park and was scared away by the cook yesterday, ran out on the lawn at the back of the building. Under a clump of bushes there was a homeless tiger cat in a crouching position watching the vulture. The cat was looking at the rat and the rat was looking at the cat. The cat was looking at the rat and the rat was looking at the cat. The cat was looking at the rat and the rat was looking at the cat.

When the cat saw the rat he put after it and the rat headed for the eagle cage as a place of safety. Pussy was the better punner and had almost secured the prize when the pursued sprang upon the cat, coping and got into the cage. He ran over a corner in which there was a small bear and landed for the big birds, and got into a burrow.

The golden eagles up on the perch blinked their eyes in front of their cage and over-looked the cat in their immediate neighborhood. The pair of Griffon vultures in the adjoining compartment were more vigilant, and like the sparrows, the cat and the rat were thinking of breakfast. The rat poked its nose out of the hole in the sand and thinking the coast was clear stepped over to the next compartment.

The cat stole along the coping on the outside of the cage when it should have been on its intent upon its intended victim that it took no notice of the vulture that hopped down from its perch of stones and made its way to the inside of the coping. The talons of the big bird of prey were on the cat in a grip from which there was no escape and dragged it under the meshed wire into the cage. Pussy writhed and spat and clawed in an attempt to get free from the enemy and knocked some feathers from her captor, but the claws of the bird were too strong for her. Then his sharp beak. Repeated blows were dealt the cat, and the cat was dead. The cat was dead. The cat was dead.

His mate had pounced on the rat, and while the two were fighting of their prey the eagle looked down with scorn. The cat was dead. The cat was dead. The cat was dead.

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**KNICKERBOCKER THEATRE.** 4th St. & 4th St. Eves. & Sat. Saturday 2.15. **MATTIE WILLIAMS** **LITTLE CHERUB** **JAMES BLAKELEY** TOM WISE & 10 others.

**FRITZI SCHEFF** **MILIE**  
The play of the day. The play of the day. The play of the day.

**AMUSEMENTS.**

**EMPIRE THEATRE.** 4th St. & 4th St. Eves. & Sat. Saturday 2.15. **JOHN DREW** Eves. & Sat. Saturday 2.15. **MATTIE WILLIAMS** **LITTLE CHERUB** **JAMES BLAKELEY** TOM WISE & 10 others.

**CRITERION THEATRE.** 4th St. & 4th St. Eves. & Sat. Saturday 2.15. **MATTIE WILLIAMS** **LITTLE CHERUB** **JAMES BLAKELEY** TOM WISE & 10 others.

**NUDSON THEATRE.** 4th St. & 4th St. Eves. & Sat. Saturday 2.15. **MATTIE WILLIAMS** **LITTLE CHERUB** **JAMES BLAKELEY** TOM WISE & 10 others.

**THE HYPOCRITES**  
Great Success! The play of the day. The play of the day. The play of the day.

**SAVOY THEATRE.** 4th St. & 4th St. Eves. & Sat. Saturday 2.15. **MATTIE WILLIAMS** **LITTLE CHERUB** **JAMES BLAKELEY** TOM WISE & 10 others.

**ROSE STALL**  
The play of the day. The play of the day. The play of the day.

**LYCEUM THEATRE.** 4th St. & 4th St. Eves. & Sat. Saturday 2.15. **MATTIE WILLIAMS** **LITTLE CHERUB** **JAMES BLAKELEY** TOM WISE & 10 others.

**SECOND THE LION & THE MOUSE**  
The play of the day. The play of the day. The play of the day.

**GARRICK THEATRE.** 4th St. & 4th St. Eves. & Sat. Saturday 2.15. **MATTIE WILLIAMS** **LITTLE CHERUB** **JAMES BLAKELEY** TOM WISE & 10 others.

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**KNICKERBOCKER THEATRE.** 4th St. & 4th St. Eves. & Sat. Saturday 2.15. **MATTIE WILLIAMS** **LITTLE CHERUB** **JAMES BLAKELEY** TOM WISE & 10 others.

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The play of the day. The play of the day. The play of the day.

**AMUSEMENTS.**

**EMPIRE THEATRE.** 4th St. & 4th St. Eves